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ABSTRACT

Suggestions for strengthening lifelong education at Qatar's University and other Arab universities are offered that might apply to other countries. Particular attention is devoted to: various views of the relative functions, content, and duration of initial and higher education; new procedures of admission and the evaluation of experience; new organizational patterns required for the purpose of lifelong education (e.g., recurrent education, credit system); special problems arising in the organization of short courses, refresher courses, and other options at the higher education level; ways of ensuring that the underprivileged socioeconomic classes take advantage of widening opportunities for higher education; means of ensuring high participation by the teaching staff in efforts to make lifelong education a reality in universities; the community service function of higher education, including the role of university extension services; and the contribution of higher education to reform of primary and secondary education. The role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization in lifelong learning, and specifically results from its 1977-1982 plan, are also considered. Additionally, 11 implications of providing lifelong education to higher education are identified. (SW)

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Lifelong Education in University Life in the Arab Countries : The Qatar University Experience

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Paper presented at
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LIFELONG EDUCATION IN UNIVERSITY LIFE IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES: THE QATAR UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE.

By

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I. INTRODUCTION: Background and Objectives of the Paper

The purpose of this paper is essentially to contribute to the elaboration, and thereby to the relevance and effectiveness, of Qatar's University programme on the best way of making Lifelong education a normal part of university activity, by submitting suggestions or advice to the Qatar University authorities and to other Arab universities on the preparation or implementation of their plan of activities in this field specifically by identifying areas of priority for research and other forms of action.

The second purpose of this paper is to share with comparative and international educators, recently compiled data of Unesco's Medium Term Plan (1977-1982), where the promotion of the role of higher education in Lifelong education is singled out as one of the major aims of Unesco's programme in the field of higher education.

The third purpose is to exchange views on the concept of Lifelong education and its major implications for traditional establishment of higher education in developed and developing countries (e.g. Arab countries), namely, the adjustments required in:

a) Their organizational structures and administrations.

b) Their admission requirements.

c) Their curricula.

d) Their teaching methods.

e) Their approach to student assessment.

f) The composition of their teaching staff.

g) Their conception of their community service function.

Finally, the general objective of this paper is to formulate several suggestions and recommendations for strengthening Lifelong education in university life in Qatar's University and other Arab universities, which might apply to the varying conditions of those countries.

Particular attention will be devoted to:

a) Various views of the relative functions, content and duration of initial and higher education.

b) New procedures of admission and the evaluation of experience.

c) New organizational patterns required for the purpose of Lifelong education (recurrent education, credit system, etc.).

d) Special problems arising in the organization of short courses, refresher courses, etc. at the higher educational level.

e) Ways of ensuring that the underprivileged socio-economic classes do in fact take advantaged of widening opportunities for higher education.

f) Means of ensuring high participation by the teaching staff in efforts to make Lifelong education a reality in universities.

g) The community service function of higher education, including the role of university extension services.

h) The contribution of higher education to the reform of primary and secondary education.

II. THE CONCEPT OF LIFELONG EDUCATION

The working document for a UNESCO meeting on pre-school education held in January 1978, defines Lifelong education as follows: "The concept of Lifelong education has its origins in the distant past and features in the works of a large number or philosophers and educators, but in its recent form it stems from the practice of adult education and from the ideas to which this has given rise; it is therefore bound up with the desire to meet the growing demand for education which is characteristic of our age and with a movement in favour of democratization which entails not only general access to education but also equality of opportunity, to be achieved through education which is adapted to the aspirations, characteristics and needs of the different age groups and the various socio-economic and occupational categories. The 'Lifelong education' approach is also associated with the fact, which has already been referred to that as school systems for obvious reasons of finance, cannot meet the whole of the demand for education, it is essential to employ all the educational resources of society to this end." (1)

A document prepared for the nineteenth session of Unesco's General Conference on the results of Unesco action in favour of Lifelong education (2) brings out the salient features of the concept. It is described as "neither limited in time to the period of schooling, nor in space to the school and its methods it links up the whole of the community's educational activities and resources, aiming alike at the full developing of the individual's potentialities and at the advancement of society undergoing transformation, which is consciously resolved to change. The same document calls Lifelong education "... a source

of coherence and integration," making it "...possible to synthesize elements already included in existing educational systems...," and a source of "guidelines for the restructuring and reforming of the various components...." of educational systems.

The Second World Conference on Adult Education, which met in Montreal in 1960, was the first Unesco body to make wide use of the term Lifelong education' in the documents. From 1965 onwards, the concept began to gain increasing recognition. The 1968 student uprisings contributed to this process, as many aspects of the educational system in numerous countries in various parts of the World were put in question. Another landmark was the United Nation's International Education Year, in 1970, which (among other things) drew attention to the concept of Lifelong education. In the same year, Unesco's General Conference, at its sixteenth session, for the first time reached a wide consensus on the principle of Lifelong education; it also called on the organization to move from the theoretical consideration of the concept to its practical implementation in the Members States. In 1970 as well, UNESCO published a basic work on the subject An Introduction to Lifelong Education (3) - written by a member of the Secretariat, Paul Lengrand. This book was subsequently translated into 11 languages.

The work of the International Commission on the Development of Education must be singled out for its unique contribution to the development of the Lifelong education principle. Established in 1971, the commission published its report in 1972 under the title Learning to Be. Its findings were based on 55 preparatory studies, which form the basis for another publication, entitled Education On the Move. One of the basic 20 principles laid down by the Commission is that "Every individual must be in a position to keep learning throughout his life. The idea of Lifelong education is the keystone of the Learning society."

Since 1972, Unesco has endeavoured to spell out the implications of the Lifelong education principle for the various components of educational systems. The consequences of Lifelong education may be summed up as the need to provide opportunities for advanced learning to persons and groups who have tradtionally had limited or no access to it because of their socio-economic position, age, geographical isolation or for other reasons.

Unesco has been active in the field of the various aspects of the role of higher education in Lifelong education for several years. In 1971, work began on a long-term Unesco programme to promote new trends in higher education in the light of the Organization's commitment to Lifelong education as a guiding principle for the fundamental renewal of educational systems. Considering that traditional institutions of higher education were often poorly suited to contemporary needs and in order to contribute to the exchange of information in this area Unesco undertook a number of studies on current experiments, seeking to establish or develop alternatives to traditional University structures and on related themes. These studies, which covered individual countries

or groups of countries in various regions of the world, have been distributed to all Member States and to interested institutions and individuals and have served as background documentation for several Unesco meetings.

A symposium on the role of higher education in Lifelong education, held in Moscow in June 1974, provided an opportunity for a general exchange of ideas and experiences in this area. One of the basic points made in the symposium's final report (4) is that the needs of society "must serve as a basis for the development.....of new educational activities and curricula both inside and outside the system of higher education." The report goes on to say that higher education teachers must realize their responsibilities to society and act accordingly. It also emphasizes the right of students, whether young people or adults, "...to participate in defining the objectives, contents, methods and assessment criteria of an educational system which concerns them first and foremont." Participants felt strongly that "self-learning was one of the most important aspects of Lifelong education," and that "training for Lifelong education might become the aim of both initial and further education."

To examine in greater depth and detail some of the issues raised at the above symposium, a Meeting of Experts on Post-Secondary Education for Persons Gainfully Employed was convened in London in July 1976. The experts were asked, among other things, to advise the Organization on its program in this field. The phrase "Post-Secondary Education for the Gainfully Employed" was defined as referring to people who had completed their secondary education or had acquired equivalent qualifications and who were in paid employment.

The committee unanimously adopted a number of recommendations on the subject, the first of which requested Unesco to "draw the attention of Member States to the importance of post-secondary education for the gainfully employed as an indispensable factor contributing both to economic and social development and to the well-being of the individuals concerned." Another recommendation states, "The timing of post-secondary education during a person's career should be a function of his occupational objectives, his interests, needs and personal abilities in the area of general social and civic education, and should not generally be limited to any specific time frame. There are, however, critical times for education associated with retraining through a person's lifetime." Other recommendations deal with specific aspects of the subject, such as the wide availability at relatively low cost of modern recording and communication media and their usefulness in this context, the need for close collaboration between education and industry, the concern of the gainfully employed for the creditation of their education to widen the "basis for entry to post-secondary education for persons gainfully employed, particularly for those with minimal formal educational qualifications, both with work and life experience" and the problems of organizing short, mid-career, non-formal courses. Finally Unesco is asked to encourage support for the terms of the Convention and Recommendation on Paid Educational Leave adopted by the international Labour Conference in 1974.(5)

Mention should also be made of the Round Table on the Contribution of Higher Education in Europe to the Development of Changing Societies, organized by the European Centre for Higher Education in September 1976, of the Seminar on the Problems Involved in Setting Up New Types of Higher Education Institutions and Programmes in Developing Countries and Regions, held in Paris in October 1976, and of the series of seminars: Helsinki (1972), Paris (1973), Turin (1975), Madison-Wisconsin (United States of America) (1975), New Delhi (1976), devoted to continuing education.

Two publications closely related to the theme of this paper have been published. One is a general study of the subject by Professor Gareth L. Williams of the University of Lancaster. It is entitled: Towards Lifelong Education: A New Role for Higher Education Institutions. (7) The author starts from the premise that opportunities for Lifelong education at all levels should be made available to the greatest number of people and argues that the entire educational system should become "an integrated network of diversified educational offers, aimed at providing equal opportunities for all people at all stages of their lives." The book examines the contribution so far made by universities and other institutions of higher education, and proposes ways in which that contribution can be extended and developed. The other publication , which is entitled Lifelong Education and University Resources, was prepared jointly by Unesco and the International Association of Universities and is a collection of contributions on the above theme, by authors from Sweden, Canada, Switzerland, the Sudan, Poland, Ghana and France.

As a follow-up to the previously mentioned Meeting of Experts on Post-Secondary Education for Persons Gainfully Employed, a small consultation on this subject was held in Paris in October 1977. This consultation was based on a specific recommendation adopted by the Committee. It focused on the following topics:

(a) existing and desirable counselling and information services for employed persons undertaking or wishing to undertake post-secondary studies:

(b) problems of curricular relevance for employed persons undertaking post-secondary studies, and possible structures for developing curricula to meet the requirements of individuals and various groups of employers and of society as a whole.

In addition, a study is currently being undertaken by Unesco on the evaluation of working experience as a substitute for formal academic entrance requirements. It should also be noted in this context that Unesco's entire programme on the comparability and recognition of mobility is governed by the open-minded evaluation of achievement and experience. Finally, certain aspects of other current Unesco activities in the field of higher education, several studies and a meeting on the gearing of higher education to the needs of society, an inventory of non-traditional post-secondary education institutions, various activities undertaken by the European Centre for Higher Education, activities undertaken by Unesco in collaboration with a number of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, etc., can also be considered relevant to the theme of this paper.

III MAJOR IMPLICATIONS OF THE LIFELONG EDUCATION CONCEPT AND TRADITIONAL SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE ARAB COUNTRIES

In the remainder of this paper, the major implications of the Lifelong education principle for traditicnal establishments of higher education in developed and developing countries (the Arab countries, e.g., State of Qater) will be outlined; a number of selected themes relating to the promotion of Lifelong education as a normal part of university life will be discussed in somewhat greater depth. Before proceeding, however, the authors feel it important to explain why they consider this entire subject of relevance to the Arab countries and not only to the State of Qater.

As was pointed out by several participants from developing countries at the Meeting of Experts on Post-Secondary Education for Persons Gainfully Employed, the promotion of Lifelong education at the tertiary level (higher education) is sometimes considered as a 'luxury' in countries with a high rate of illiteracy or far less than universal primary education. However, as Gareth Williams indicates: "There are some features of developing countries that make certain aspects of Lifelong education particularly important. These are countries (e.g. the Arab countries in the Arabian Gulf), which are concentrating most of their efforts on rapid economic growth and which wish to mobilize all their human resources for this purpose. It is likely that in such countries educational growth will be rapid during the next few decades and, unless the provision of opportunities for adults grows along with the expansion of more conventional branches of education, the gap in attitudes and aptitudes between young people and their elders is likely to become unacceptably wide and to create many social and personal tensions." (7) Elaborating on this, the authors of this paper go on to state that: Of immediate concern to many developing countries (e.g. the Arab countries in the Arabian Gulf) is the need to obtain quickly the qualified manpower necessary to map their own public and private administrations, their own education and medical services and the key positions in their own industrial development. The quickest and least socially devisive way of acquiring such manpower is by selecting suitable people from amongst those already in the labour force and retraining them and upgrading their skills.

We feel that this argument, among others, makes a strong case in favour of Lifelong education at the post-secondary level in the Arab countries and especially in the State of Qatar.

It goes without saying that the concept of Lifelong education has major implications for every aspect of higher education from curriculum design to the choice of teaching methods to overall organization and administration, as follows:

1) Traditionally in the Arab countries, requirements for admission to higher education have been set with reference to students having just completed secondary school and immediately going on to higher education At best,

provision is made to allow students to transfer from one post-secondary educational institution to another in the course of their studies. Even this poses problems however, as establishments of higher education do not necessarily grant 'credit' for all course work undertaken at other institutions. Students enrolled in a degree programme are therefore frequently obliged to extend their period of studies and sometimes even repeat particular courses, as a result of a transfer from one university to another.

2) In a situation where Lifelong education will be the norm in the Arab countries of the Arabian Gulf (e.g. State of Qatar), a large percentage of students will be adults, many of whom will be employed and who will study part-time. Some adult students will be attending an institution of higher education for the first time, others will be enrolled in retraining programmes of various durations. At the same time, the proportion of young people entering higher education immediately after secondary school, will continue to increase in many countries.

3) In this context, it would, of course, be inappropriate to base admission exclusively on secondary school records or the results of a secondary school leaving examination, as is the case, in fact, in most of the Arab countries in the Arabian Gulf. Higher education will need to make adequate provision for the recognition of knowledge acquired outside the formal educational systems of these countries: at the place of work, through reading and travelling and on the basis of ordinary day-to-day living. Similarly, the type of knowledge and intellectual abilities required of an 18-year old as a reasonable indication of his or her capacity for advanced studies should not be the same as those expected of a 40-year old potential student. The former may learn more quickly and draw more easily on a storehouse of recently-learned facts, but the latter may show greater ability in perceiving relationships between different phenomena or events, and sounder judgement based on greater and more varied experience. The essential point is that admission requirements should be such that they can take into account the experience, knowledge, skills, and personal enrichment acquired in a variety of situations and that they can forecast with a reasonable degree of accuracy the applicant's chances of benefiting from a particular course of study.

4) In the same way, post-secondary curricula will need to be adjusted to meet the needs and interests of an increasingly heterogenous student body. Many adult students will have resumed their studies for professional reasons: to upgrade their skills and thus improve their chances for promotion, or to combat obsolescence by learning new skills in preparation for a new career. Such students are likely to be very demanding in terms of curricular relevance to their own objectives. They may, for instance, become impatient with a traditionally academic approach to a problem, and will probably expect course content to be based not only on prevalent theories in a given field, but also on practical considerations or factors which they will have encountered or are likely to encounter in a working situation.

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5) The same also hold true, though perhaps to a lesser extent, for courses followed strictly out of personal interest, rather than for professional reasons. Here again, course content will need to take into account the greater maturing and experience of adult students, as compared with the 18 - 24 age group. Institutions of higher education and universities may well find it necessary to diversify their course offerings to meet the needs of various student sub-groups. Alternatively, as this may prove too costly, they will need to introduce the maximum of flexibility in the choice of courses and in the study materials prescribed for each course.

6) Teaching methods will also need to be diversified and adapted to suit various conditions and learning characteristics. Many students, for instance, may not be able to attend classes regularly, if at all and will have to rely essentially on independent study with the help of specially designed learning materials. Much progress has already been made in this direction, as shown by the many examples cited in Unesco's publication entitled Open Learning: Systems and Problems in Post-Secondary Education, by M. MacKenzie et al. The media used for educational purposes are multifold, and include among other things, television, radio, audio and video-tape recordings, telephone, films and, of course, the printed word. In devising teaching methods appropriate for distant learners, however, care needs to be taken to provide for some direct contact between the individual student and other students and teaching staff. The independent learner may require explanations to understand particularly difficult questions in addition to those provided in the 'packaged' learning materials. More important,the student needs an opportunity to voice questions and ideas, and to hear those of other people. This exchange is an essential aspect of higher educational process, it is also the aspect for which no satisfactory alternative would seem to be available. It is difficult to replace 'contact' hours inthe form of discussion groups or seminars.

7) Nor will universities or institutions of higher education be able to teach those students - 'young' and 'adult' - who are able to attend classes on a regular basis inthe traditional way. Here as well, due regard will need to be paid to differences in maturing, experience and type of learning ability. On this subject, Gareth Williams points out: "In general, because of their wider experience in the real world and because of their stronger motivation, adult students are more likely to be 'self directed' than adolescents and to learn better therefore from methods of teaching that involve participation rather than passive reception of knowledge. Such participatory methods include discussion and easy work, but above all, small-scale projects of various kinds by which the student, through his own researches, can illustrate the more abstract general principles with which higher education must also be concerned."

8) In a Lifelong education context, teaching students how to study will be an essential function of all educational institutions. Teaching methods should therefore be chosen with a view to increasing students' self-reliance and resourcefulness in a learning situation. The subject of teaching methods is dealt with extensively in a Unesco publication by Donald Bligh, entitled New Methods and Techniques in Post-Secondary Education.

9) What has been said about admission requirements, curriculum design and teaching methods also applies to student assessment. The means chosen to evaluate student performance will need to reflect the differences among them in terms of age, experience, interests and type of intellectual ability. Different assessment methods may need to be used with different students, to give each a chance to perform to the best of his or her ability. In this context, it is interesting to recall the previously mentioned recommendation on creditation (9) adopted by the Committee of Experts on Post-Secondary Education for Persons Gainfully Employed. This recommendation which was unanimously approved by experts from fourteen very different countires, would seem to belie the view held in certain circles that education should move away from assessment and creditation.

10) In a Lifelong education context, the recruitment base of higher education teachers will naturally be broader than in the past, and a greater use will be made of part time teachers. There is already a marked trend in this direction. Higher education will increasingly require, as part time teachers, practitioners in various fields who will be attuned to the needs and interests of adult students undertaking further studies for professional reasons and of younger students anxious to prepare themselves as best as possible for the first stage of a rewarding career. At the same time, it may be profitable for professional educators to spend some time in industry or government, for instance, to keep in touch with the world outside academia.

11) Changes will also be needed in the organizational structure and administration of universities and other higher educational institutions to handle a larger and more heterogenous student body. Post-secondary institutions may, for example, find it necessary to establish a special unit to deal with correspondence students. This has many ramifications from staffing to the preparation of adequate learning materials, and to the organization of discussion groups over a wide geographical area. Setting up a sandwich course for the first time, has also many administrative and organizational implications. A number of specific organizational changes which might result from Lifelong education, will be discussed in section IV. In many cases these changes will be a consequence of modifications in other areas, such as curricula or the composition of the teaching staff.

The changing conception in a Lifelong education context of universities and higher education's community service function in the Arab countries in the Arabian Gulf, will also be dealt with under another heading. In a nutshell, universities and other higher education institutes in this region will need to be more responsive than they have perhaps been in the past to the educational interests and requirements of the community of the Gulf region as a whole.

IV SELECTED THEMES RELATING TO THE PROMOTION OF LIFELONG EDUCATION AS A NORMAL PART OF UNIVERSITY LIFE IN QATAR'S UNIVERSITY AND IN THE OTHER ARAB UNIVERSITIES

A. The Function, Content and Duration of Initial and Further Higher Education

The debate between those who view the fundamental purpose of universities and higher education as being primarily to cater for the intellectual development of individuals, and those who see it as being to meet the needs of society as a whole, has swayed back and forth in all cultures and at all periods of history. Gareth Williams in Towards Lifelong Education: A New Role for Higher Education Institutions, states: "Fifty years ago, the dominant purpose of higher education in many countries was to provide a broad liberal education to a selected few would would in time assume positions of national leadership. An exception was however made for medicine, a highly specialized field for which training was none the less provided essentially by univerisites." (10)

Today the pendulum has swung in the other direction: Establishments of post-secondary education offer specialist training not only in medicine and law, but in countless other fields as well, from computer sciences and business administration to physical or occupational therapy and nursing. The vast majority of today's university graduates are very concerned indeed about their employment prospects and, to quote Gareth Williams again, wish "to master a narrower range of skills sufficiently thoroughly to be able to practice a particular occupation with as much success as possible." They are equally anxious , on the other hand, "to keep open as many options as possible in later life through a broad preparation in the principles of many disiplines and areas of study" and "to avoid spending considerable time acquiring specialized skills which may later prove to be unnecessary or become obsolescent." (11)

When seen as a whole, contemporary educational systems must of course provide both general and specialized education. What is at issue is the 'optimal' mix between as well as the timing and sequence of general and specialized or vocationally-oriented education, given a particular set of circumstances and professional and other objectives. The discussion to follow will focus on further higher education for professional purposes. Individuals will, of course, wish to return to university on a full-time and, more commonly, on a part-time basis, purely out of personal interest. In such cases, however, decisions regarding sequence and timing are entirely individual. The basic constraint here, in the light of limited resources, is the availability of courses and of university places.

An essential consideration in discussing the content of higher education is the specific pattern of the country's manpower needs. For instance, as Colin Adamson points out in his working paper for the Meeting of Experts on Post-Secondary Education for Persons Gainfully Employed, A very common problem in the developing countries (e.g., the Arab countries) is the shortage of people at the level of what is customarily called 'the technicians', which is the term in most general use for the middle-rank worker in industry, commerce, society's infrastructure or the government apparatus" (12). This is often coupled with a strong social demand for degrees with a consequent over-production of graduates.

Similarly, one may wonder whether the labour market can effectively absorb large numbers of 'generalists' with only a first university degree and no practical experience, to the mutual satisfaction of both employer and employee. Graduate unemployment, particularly among liberal arts graduates, is a severe problem in countries as varied as France, India, Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom and the United States, to mention only a few. On the other hand, young 'generalists' are often over-qualified for the jobs they do get, with all the waste of resources and social and personal problems this entails.

In this context, one should also look at prevalent career patterns. It is increasingly common for specialists to move into general managerial positions as they advance in thier career. Their specialized knowledge and experience are, of course essential prerequisites for their new posts. However, they may well require further education in business administration, as well as in other fields such as economics, political science and international relations.

Long studies - such as medicine - require special consideration. Given the time and expenditure involved, it would not seem valid from either the individual's or the society's point of view for someone to start medical studies at, say, 40; with retirement set at between 60 and 65 in most countries. This would only allow him or her to practise for 10 to 15 years, which cannot be considered a sound return on the investment made. Moreover, it must be kept in mind that for an adult to undertake further studies does involve a number of sacrifices. Family life suffers, leisure time is drastically reduced with ensuing fatigue and even health problems. There are often serious financial difficulties if a period of full-time study is necessary as study leave with pay is still a relative rarity, particularly among developing countries.(13)

Authorities of the universities in the Gulf region are invited to consider various views of the function, content and duration of initial and further higher education, and to attempt to define the 'optimal' mix between, as well as the timing and sequence of general and specialized or vocationally-orientated education, under different sets of circumstances and professional and other objectives.

To sum up, they may distinguish between the basic patterns of education and training outlined below.

a) Pattern A: General education is provided in school and during the initial phase of higher education. Subsequent periods of higher education are primarily devoted to specialized courses to meet specific needs which arise in the course of a person's career, for instance. Such courses are often short say, one year or under. This approach has many supporters. Gareth Williams states, "There is ....a wide consensus of opinion that in the perspective of Lifelong education, considerable emphasis should be placed in the initial phase on the acquisition of basic mental tools and on the development of aptitudes, including the aptitude to learn in the course of later phases. This will provide the basis on which specialisation can be achieved at a later stage when further educational or training opportunities occur. (14)

b) Pattern B: This is similar to pattern A, except that the period of general education in school and in higher education is immediately followed by a relatively short, specialized or vocationally oriented course to improve the student's chances of finding suitable employment. Periods of further education are essentially devoted to relatively short specialized courses.

c) Pattern C: General education is provided in the school system, and the student specializes during the initial phase of higher education. Subsequent periods of higher education are basically devoted to specialized courses to update skills in the same field or to learn new skills - such as managerial skills - required by a change in career, and to general education courses which may also be needed as a result of professional advancement.

B. New Procedures of Admission and of Evaluation of Experience

As has been pointed out already, admission to universities and other higher education institutes today is generally based on completion of secondary school, regardless of the applicant's age and experience. There are sometimes additional requirements such as interviews and aptitude tests, as in some institutions of higher education in Australia and the United States. Making a reality of Lifelong education, however, will require new admission standards to be devised, taking into acount work and life experience. This question received considrable attention at the Meeting of Experts on Post-Secondary Education for Persons Gainfully Employed and is the subject of one of the recommendations adopted at that meeting. (15)

A number of countries have introduced significant innovations in this area. One of the best known examples is the Swedish 25:5 experiment', launched in 1969. Regardless of previous format education, anyone aged 25 or above and having worked for at least 5 years is entitled under this scheme to enrol for a limited range of courses at the University, provided that in certain cases, such as mathematics, particular entrance requirements must be met (usually successful completion of upper secondary schooling in the subject concerned). Thousands of adults have taken advantage of this scheme, and examination results have been impressive. (16)

In the Soviet Union, the Universities were opened in 1918 to all citizens over 16, regardless of their prior education and without entrance examinations. This was done both for social reasons and to help meet the economy's need for trained manpower. Special University departments for workers were established starting in 1919. In 1934, the situation having changed, entrance examinations were reintroduced in one or several subjects, and university degrees and titles were restored. Today, extra 'points' are granted in the selection process to University applicants with working experience.

In the German Democratic Republic, applicants to institutions of higher education are generally required to have the appropriate secondary school leaving examination as well as several years' practical experience. (17)

In Australia, while no post-secondary institution has a completely open system of admission, most now have degrees of openness particularly for adults. In general, persons who did not complete secondary education but have shown evidence of ability in their field of employment may apply for admission to a post-secondary institution. The University of New England for instance, has granted provisional adult matriculation to 25% of its extra students on this basis, and results compare favourably with those of normal matriculants. Under the Mature Students Entry Programme of the Salisbury College of Advanced Education in South Australia, applicants are given an interview, an essay to write and a standard entry test designed to measure their potential for tertiary study.

College results have shown an average of 55% for mature students in distinctions as against 25% for the rest of the College. The Flinders University in South Australia also uses interviews and short tests to screen applicants who have met normal entry requirements. Some institutions make special provision to facilitate admission for socially disadvantaged groups. This approach is also used in the United States.

In Papua New Guinea, post-secondary institutions were established before the secondary-school system was able to supply it with a sufficient number

of qualified applicants. Higher education institutions, therefore, tend to recruit at Form IV rather than Form VI of secondary school,as would normally be the case, and to accept responsibility for remedial work and bridging courses to bring students up to the requested level. (18)

In France, a number of university-run courses for the employed, benefiting from State assistance under 1971 Legislation, are open to persons who have not completed secondary school. (19)

There are no admission requirements for certain'public culture' courses offered by establishments of higher education in Egypt. (20)

To sum up, a number of countries have taken steps to recognize working experience for admission purposes, either by granting extra 'points' in the selection process to applicants with such experience, as in the USSR, or by requiring that all applicants to higher education have a number of years professional experience, as in the German Democratic Republic, or by accepting working experience as a substitute for formal academic entrance requirements, as in Sweden. In some countries, such as Australia and the United States, measures have been taken to ease admission for members of socially disadvantaged groups.

For applicants who have not completed secondary school, one may distinguish between the following approaches which are currently used in various countries to determine admissibility:

a) A special standard examination for mature entrants as a substitute for the secondary school-leaving examination; preparatory courses are sometimes offered to improve the applicants' chances of passing this examination.

b) Bridging courses prior to entry, seeking to make up deficiencies in the prospective students' knowledge, and thus increase their chances of success in their University studies.

c) Working experience as a substitute for formal academic entrance requirements.

d) A case-by-case approach, based on interviews and similar individual screening procedures.

There are, of course, problems with any of these approaches. Standardized examinations do not necessarily provide an accurate reflection of the applicant's ability, while seuccessful bridging courses are difficult to design and may involved considerable expenditure. As regards the third approach listed above, it may be argued that working experience does not always imply ability to undertake -ny benefit from advanced studies. The case-by-case approach has much to commend it, but is expensive and time-consuming. As for the fifth approach, in view of efficiency considerations, it can only be used in a very limited number of cases, where the primary objective is to provide general educational services to the Community and no specific results are expected. In spite of the difficulties with each of these approaches, they represent a very positive move towards the adjustment of entrance requirements in the light of the Lifelong principle.

Authorities of the Universities and Institutions of higher education in the Gulf region are invited to discuss this section regarding various approaches seeking to recognize work and life experience forr purposes of admission to higher education.

C. New Organizational Patterns required for the Purpose of Lifelong Education

A broad organizational concept which closely reflects the objectives of lifelong education is that of 'recurrent education.' We find in the traditional Islamic education system that higher education was not, in the beginning, a continuation of child or youth education; it was rather an education to which adults looked forward to have an insight into religious and worldly affairs. This is the philosophy of education among the Muslims: Learning for earning a living in this worldly life and to get prepared for the life hereafter. This philosophy held prominence at the Universities of Al-Azhar (Egypt) - Damascus (Syria) - Tunis, Qayrewan (Tunis) - Baghdad (Iraq) and other places. These institutions were characterized by considerable flexibility. Any learner could devote all his time to learning if he wanted or had to do so; otherwise, he could divide his time between some kind of work for earning his living and learning to acquire culture, guidance and enlightenment. He might spend several years in such a quest for learning. The Islamic universities thus offered opportunities for full -time learning and a combination between learning and work or what is now known as 'recurrent education." This term is defined as follows in Recurrent Education: A Strategy for Lifeong Learning, published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Centre for

Educational Research and Innovation, "The concept of recurrent education intends to propose a concrete framework within which a great part of the individual's lifelong learning can take place. It differs from the concept of 'permanent' education, by making the principles of alternation between educationand other activities central to the definition." (22) Elsewhere, the report states, "The essence of the recurrent education proposition...is the distribution of education over the lifespan of the individual in a recurring way. This means a break with the present practice of a long, uninterrupted pre-work period of full-time schooling.... It also implies the alternation of education with other activities, of which the principal would be work, but which might also include leisure and retirement. One of its essential potential outcomes is to make it possible for the individual to abandon the unalterable education-work-leisure-retirement sequence and to enable him tomix and alternate these activities within the limits of what is socially possible and in accordance with his own desires and aspirations."

However, one must distinguish between an approach to recurrent education, which provides opportunities for resuming studies, and a more radical one, which indeed is in keeping with the logic of the system and which would institutionalize the shortening of the duration of initial higher education on the assumption that studies will be resumed at a later stage. If the latter approach prevails, caution must be exercised so that a reduced provision for initial higher education does not prove detrimental to the less privileged groups in terms of economic resources or cultural background, as experience shows that they tend to resort less frequently to opportunities for continuing education than persons from more privileged groups. In other terms, a recurrent pattern of higher education, if it is to contribute towards democratization, may require provision for a compulsory period of higher education after an early interruption followed by a period of work. This, however, leads to a concept of adult education which departs from the one usually accepted, which is based on the principle of free choice of adults in embarking on adult education courses.

The mainstays of such a system are mobility, flexibility and the availability of means of enablement, and information and counselling services.

What is called the 'credit system' in English, 'systems d'unites capitalisables' in French and 'Baukdstensystem' in German can contribute substantially to the mobility of individuals within and between educational institutions, and between education and other activities. Essentially, this system means doing away with the fixed yearly curriculum by breaking up a course into several components, sometimes called 'modules.' Each of

these components is assigned one or more credit points, depending on the amount of work involved for the student. Within certain limits, these modules can be combined in a variety of ways to suit individual interests and requirements. This system has been in operation in the United States for many years, where it has enabled individuals to study in their own homes, often on a part-time basis.

Another very important element in this context is the international recognition of studies and degrees. This is vital in an age where it is common for students to study - and even work - in two or more countries. Mention should be made of the considerable efforts made by UNESCO, and also by the Council of Europe and other international and regional organizations to facilitate the recognition of studies and degrees across national boundaries.

In its present programme, UNESCO is striving to "draw up standards and prepare practical arrangements with regard to the mobility of persons in higher education, in particular in connexion with the recognition of studies, diplomas and degrees and the reintegration of such persons in their countries of origin. The Organization is endeavouring to move away from the comparison of certificates, diplomas and degrees, to an approach based on the individual's overall training, education and experience."

International conventions have been drawn up on this basis, and two have already been signed: the Convention for the States of Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted in Mexico City on 19 July 1974, and that for the Arab and European States bordering on the Mediterranean, adopted in Nice on 17 December 1976. Work is currently under way for the elaboration and adoption of similar conventions for the African States, the Arab States, and the European States, respectively. Steps are being taken to begin preparations for a convention covering the Member States of Asia. The ultimate goal of UNESCO's programme in this field is the adoption of a universal convention, linking signatories from every region of the globe.

The implementation of the Lifelong education principle at the tertiary level requires considerable flexibility in the scheduling of classes to suit the needs of part-time students. More and more courses will need to be taught in the evening and on weekends. Gareth Williams suggests that universities should arrange their timetables so that individual students can follow several courses in a given discipline on the same day. Generally speaking, course lengths and structures should be as varied as possible.(22) Provision also needs to be made, of course, for students

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who are unable to attend classes by arranging for distance education.

The availability of financial assistance - in the form of study leave or of various types of study grants - to adult stduents, including those who study part-time, is obviously an essential prerequisite of a higher education system organized on the basis of the Lifelong education principle. Access to information on educational opportunities is equally vital, and calls for the existence of a wide and effective network of information and counseling services. These two points will be referred to again under another heading.

Authorities of the Universities and institutions of higher education in the Gulf region are invited to discuss various new organizational patterns required for the purpose of Lifelong education, including recurrent education, with regard to the Islamic heritage in this context, the Credit System which is broadly used in the Universities of the Gulf region, the international and regional recognition of studies and degrees, more flexible scheduling, the availability of financial assistance and access to information on edudational opportunities at the post-secondary level...etc.

D. Special Problems arising in the Organization of Short Courses, Refresher Courses, etc. at the Higher Educational Level

The organization of various types of short, mid-career, non-formal courses at the post-secondary level is a complex operation which involves, among other things , assessing the demand for such courses, selecting students, making arrangements for staffing and staff training, delimiting course content in accordanne with the time available choosing teaching methods most likely to yield results within a limited time, assessing student performance and providing certification for the course.

In his working paper for the Meeting of Experts on Post-secondary Education, for Persons Gainfully Employed, Colin Adamson singles out the following prerequisities for the successful organization of short courses, refresher courses and the like by an institution of post-secondary education.

a) Enthusiasm from the staff, along with maximum logistic assistance from the Central administration, including provision for socio-economic rewards for those who make the effort to run such courses.

(b) An understanding on the part of academic staff responsible for such courses or questions such as course marketing, industrial and commercial needs, publication problems, international operations and so on.

c) A competent team of non-academic staff workers, who should be efficient organizers accustomed to a high level of personal responsibility.

d) Complete confidence between academic and non-academic staff responsible for these courses. (23)

The Committee of Experts unanimiously adopted a recommendation along these lines, focusing on the need for speical arrangements to train academic and non-academic staff in educational institutions and/or in the working environment in the organiaation of such courses. (24)

Authorities of the Universities inthe Gulf region are invited to consider the special problems arising in the organization of various types of short, mid-career, non-formal courses at the higher edudational level in their region, including the need for training in this area.

E. Ways of Ensuring that the Underprivileged Socio-Economic Classes do in Fact take Advantage of Widening Opportunities for Higher Education

One of the basic objectives of the British Open University is to make higher education available to persons who have traditionally not had access to advanced studies. Yet - and this is one of the major criticisms levied at the University - very few people in manual occupations have enrolled. In 1972, this figure stood at 6% of total Open Universty enrolments. (25)

This illustrates the complexity of the problem. One reason, it is said, why the British Open University has not been able to attract a larger number of manual workers is that it charges fairly substantial fees. Members of lower socio-economic groups, of course, require substantial financial assistance to undertake post-secondary studies in mid-career. Such assistance may take various forms; paid study leave, grants, loans, etc. Many novel funding schemes have been proposed. The United States Carnegie Commission on Higher Education for instance, suggested in its report Less Time, More Option and Toward a Learning Society: Alternative Channels to Life, Work and Service, that all persons, after completion of secondary school, would have two years of post-secondary education placed 'in the bank' for them, to be drawn upon at any time of their lives when it best suits them. (26)

But the need for financial assistance is only one aspect of the issue. Access to information about existing opportunities for lifelong education at the tertiary level is also vital. Gareth Williams in his book on lifelong education and higher education argues strongly for the development of a wide network of information and counselling services with the

active participation of institutions of advanced learning.(27)

Social attitudes also play a major role in determining whether people will avail themselves of existing educational opportunities. A person brought up to think that his or her place is in the field or factory and that higher education is the preserve of the wealthy, is very unlikely to voluntarily enrol for a programme of further education at the tertiary level. Overcoming such deeply-ingrained attitudes on a large scale is a tremendously difficult and lengthy process. It requires a considerable commitment in favour of change on the part of society, involving all levels of education and all major social institutions.

Authorities of the Universities and institutions of higher education in the Gulf region are invited to discuss various means of ensuring that underprivileged socio-economic classes (e.g., residents from the other Arab countries and the immigrants from the Asian countries and elsewhere) take advantage of widening opportunities for higher education, including different types of financial assistance, improving access to information about available post-secondary educational programmes, and ways of changing traditional social attitudes.

F. Means of Ensuring High Participation by the Teaching Staff in Efforts to Make Lifelong Education a Reality in Universities

Reference has already been made to the need for incentives to encourage academic staff in universities and institutions of higher education to participate in the organization of various types of short courses. The same applies to other activities or efforts seeking to make lifelong education a reality in universities.

Such incentives may take a wide variety of forms: including the staff member's contribution to the promotion of lifelong education as one of the criteria for tenure, where applicable, and for promotion; reducing the number of 'formal' teaching hours or administrative duties to enable the staff member to spend more time on activities related to lifelong education; improved research facilities; more travel, more frequent and/or longer sabbaticals, where applicable; and higher material benefits.

Another way of increasing the contribution of higher education teachers to the promotion of lifelong education is to provide them with advice and assistance in dealing with the changing student clientel. Teaching services centres have been established in a number of post-secondary institutions. Such centres exist in all Australian universities, for instance.(28) One of the functions of these centres should be to help university teachers understand the psychology of the adult learner and adapt course content as well as teaching and assessment methods to the needs of the adult student.

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Authorities of the Universities and institutions of higher education in the Gulf region are invited to discuss means of ensuring high participation by the teaching staff in efforts to make lifelong education a reality in their universities.

G. The Community Service Function of Higher Education, Including the Role of University Extension Services

The community service function of universities and institutions of higher education in the context of lifelong education in the Gulf region may be defined as the necessity for higher education to be responsive to the community's overall educational needs in designing curricula, establishing course syllabi, choosing teaching methods, selecting research projects and determining the provision of extension services and other facilities to the community. In other words, educational provision at the post-secondary level should be adjusted in response to community needs.

The example of Australia's Colleges of Advanced Education may be cited in this context. The CAEs have introduced a number of 'pilot courses' in such areas as basic nursing, recreation leadership, and rehabilitation work, on a 'trial run' basis, to assess community demand. If there is sufficient demand, the course is accepted and funded in the usual way. If it is not supported, it is terminated. The Gris Committee on Educational Development in New Guinea also emphasized the importance of changing courses as need changes and called for flexible arrangements so that unwanted courses could be stopped and new ones organized. The committee noted the example of the University of Papua New Guinea in providing a police studies course for inspectors, on a once-only basis to meet a specific need.(29)

Ways for higher education to stay close to community needs and to assess demands are many. Examples include 'study-service' or 'experimental education' programmes planned and operated in close collaboration with various community bodies, and 'sandwich courses' which likewise require close co-operation with public and private institutions and enterprises participating in the scheme.

Establishments of higher education also have a major role to play in providing advisory services on means of promoting lifelong education, particularly at the tertiary level. Such services can be provided not only to governments, but also to public and private institutions of various types. An institution of higher education in one country in the Gulf region (e.g., Qatar) might even provide advice in this field to the educational authorities of another country. The British Open

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University, for instance, has a well-known consultancy service of this type.

Authorities of the Universities and institutions of higher education in the Gulf region are invited to discuss the community service function of higher education in the context of lifelong education, including the role of university extension services.

H. The Contribution of Higher Education to the Reform of Primary and Secondary Education

Universities and higher education's admission criteria and procedures have a very marked impact on the curriculum of primary and secondary education.

The changes necessitated in post-secondary education admission requirements by the lifelong education principle will obviously affect the content of education at other levels. In the past, the requirements established for entrance to higher education significantly contributed to the rigidity of the overall educational system. This situation is changing and will continue to change as measures are taken to enable persons to enter higher education at different points in their lives and careers, and to recognize work and life experience for purposes of admission to establishments of advanced learning.

Primary and secondary education in a lifelong education context will need to place a greater emphasis than in the past on the development of sound habits of independent study, including the use of libraries. Much of further education, as we have seen, is predicted on ability for independent study, and on the acquisition at an early stage of life of basic verbal, numerate, aesthetic and other aptitudes and skills.

Gareth Williams suggests that the existence of opportunities for lifelong education will alleviate pressure on secondary-school students and might consequently make them develop a more genuine interest in their studies. He also emphasizes the need for students to be made aware, before completing secondary school, of the various educational opportunities which will be available to them throughout their lives.(30) This will require improved counselling and information services at all levels of education.

Higher education also has a very significant direct contribution to make to the reform of primary and secondary education by promoting and undertaking research and providing advisory services in this area, and by training teachers and educational administrators sensitive to contemporary needs and open to change.

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Authorities of the Universities and institutions of higher education in the Gulf region are invited to discuss the contribution which higher education can make to the reform of primary andsecondary education in a lifelong education context, and to make changes regarding the community's needs in this field.

V CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to study the best way of promoting life-long education in the Arab countries having regard to the Qater University experience on this subject. Reference was also made in this context where the promotion of the role of the University in lifelong education was singled out as one of the major aims of Qatar's programme in this field.

Its objective was essentially to contribute to the elaboration and thereby to the relevance and effectiveness of Qatar's university programme in this area, by submitting suggestions to Qatar's university authorities and the other Arab universities on the preparation or implementation of their plan of activities in this field.

Thus the paper focused on traditional systems and institutions of higher education, following a brief look at views of the concept of lifelong education, its major implications for traditional establishments of higher education in developed and developing countries (e.g., Arab countries), that is the adjustments required. Finally the paper formulated several suggestions and recommendations for strengthening lifelong education in university life in Qatar's University and the other Arab universities in keeping with the circumstances of the Arab countries.

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